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FROM: Jidda

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 385, February 10, 10 a. m.

Control: 5143

Rec'd: February 10, 1955
7:20 a. m.

SENT CAIRO 37, REPEATED INFORMATION DEPARTMENT 385

FOR JONES FROM AMBASSADOR

Fred Awalt tells me he learned in Beirut February 7 that TIME correspondent Collins had private interview with Prince Faisal in Cairo February 5 which Collins described as "most bitter diatribe against US that he had ever heard from anyone in all his career of interviewing people".

Can you check?

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: February 16, 1955

SUBJECT: US-Saudi Relations

PARTICIPANTS: Sheikh Jabbar, Counselor, Saudi Arabian Embassy
NE - Mr. Fritzlan

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During the course of dinner at the Yemeni Legation, Sheikh Jabbar and Mr. Fritzlan engaged in a general conversation on US-Saudi relations. Mr. Fritzlan expressed the hope that, in his new position close to Prince Faisal on the Council of Ministers, Sheikh Jabbar would take advantage of opportunities to improve the atmosphere of US-Saudi relations and in particular to explain the U.S. viewpoint with which he had doubtless become familiar.

Sheikh Jabbar embarked upon a general statement blaming the U.S. for lack of greater cordiality in relation to Saudi Arabia and specifically asking what the U.S. had done in recent years to repay Saudi Arabia for the many favors conferred, thereby gaining Saudi good will. Mr. Fritzlan suggested that Sheikh Jabbar consider the situation in Saudi Arabia as it was 20 years ago and the situation today fraught with great potentialities arising from enormous oil revenues available to the Government. Sheikh Jabbar seemed unimpressed, stating that the resources were obviously Saudi and what Aramco had done any other oil company could also have done; that the U.S. Government had contributed little if any from its Treasury for the benefit of Saudi Arabia and consequently the Saudi people wondered to what extent we were really their friends. Mr. Fritzlan reminded Sheikh Jabbar that it was through Aramco's technical skill and proficiency that the oil resources had been exploited and that King Ibn Saud originally gave the concession to Aramco through his own free choice having remarked in this connection that he gave the concession to an American company because he believed the U.S. had no territorial ambitions in the area or political

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designs upon Saudi Arabia. Mr. Fritzlan said this was true when the concession was awarded and was also the case at the present time. He added that the U.S. was spending a great deal in making available a military training mission; that we had made available Point IV assistance which the Saudi Government had asked to be withdrawn; that our offer of grant military assistance had been rejected. We had recently been looking into loan possibilities to help in the construction of the railway from Riyadh to Jidda. There was no lack of desire on our part to assist Saudi Arabia in making available technical skills and advice which were not to be found in the country. However, it would be a mistake to suppose that we were prepared to grant large sums of money for development purposes. Saudi Arabia derives enormous revenues from the oil industry and we could not possibly justify such a use of public funds.

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The question of the Turkish-Iraqi treaty came up and Mr. Fritzlan expressed the hope that Saudi Arabia would take the attitude that this defense arrangement could provide a large measure of security to Saudi Arabia itself and hence might be considered as a welcome development. He stated our policy of supporting the "northern tier" defense arrangement had been adopted after careful study as the most effective and realistic way of defending the Near East. If a communist invasion were not stopped or checked in the mountainous regions of Turkey, Iraq and Iran, there would be no obstacle to a hostile force overrunning the rest of the Arab world.

Sheikh Jabbar expressed pleasure at having an opportunity to discuss US-Saudi relations in a frank and informal manner. He seemed somewhat impressed by some of the statements made, particularly those relating to area defense and we may find he can be of some help to us in explaining our policies to his superiors in his new assignment.

adp.
NEA:NE:ADFritzlan:apg

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